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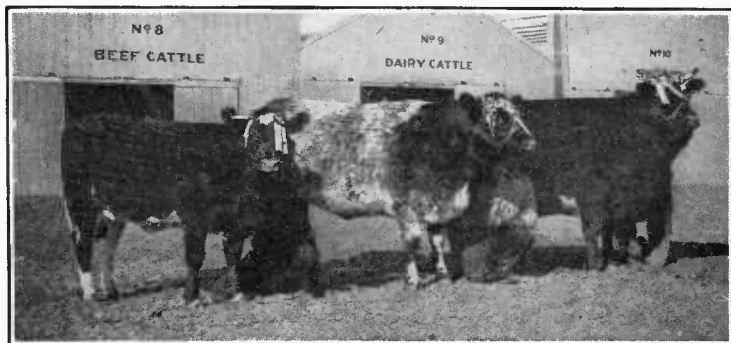
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LIVE-STOCK CLASSIFICATIONS AT COUNTY FAIRS



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ONE of the principal objects of a live-stock exhibition is to bring before the stockmen and the public a standard of excellence toward which all may strive in the improvement of domestic animals. The educational value of such an exhibition will depend largely upon two things, namely, the classification of the animals to be exhibited and the judgment of the official who passes upon the merits of the exhibits. The two are absolutely dependent upon each other in presenting the lessons which the exhibition should teach.

The classification of live stock used at many of the county fairs is such that it is of little instructive value to the public and often causes criticism alike of the judges and of fair officials. As an example, the following class is not uncommon: "Best aged stallion, any breed." In this case all aged stallions, regardless of whether they are of the pony type, saddle type, light-harness type, or draft type, are brought into competition without any qualifications whatever. Should a pony stallion be placed first, a saddle stallion second, and a draft stallion third, there is sure to be confusion in the minds of the audience and criticism of officials. Each class at a live-stock show should represent a definite type of animals which have some definite function or purpose.

It is hoped that this publication will aid very materially in standardizing the classifications at county fairs and that it will be of assistance to fair officials and prospective exhibitors.

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EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF LIVE-STOCK EXHIBITIONS.

THE chief value of live-stock exhibitions or shows, whether under the auspices of community, county, State, or larger organizations, lies in their educational features. Live-stock shows and fairs have been an important factor in the improvement of farm animals, since it is the show ring which designates the types and standards that breeders of animals strive to produce. These standards generally are based on market and economic demands.

The absorbing interest of competition in the show ring stands as the chief incentive for the breeder to exhibit his animals. If he annually enters into competition with other breeders, he will surely improve the quality and type of his herd or flock. The great value of the live-stock show ring for the less experienced breeder, however, is in the demonstration of standards which may be followed. The best qualified persons obtainable are found officiating as judges at the large exhibitions. These men know the requirements for the animals which they judge, and through them breeders become better acquainted with the standards for the breed in which they are interested and also with the faults and good points of their own exhibits.

While the chief value of exhibitions is educational, the live-stock exhibits at county fairs are often so poorly classified that frequently the educational value is largely lost. It is the purpose of this bulletin to discuss in a general way some of the factors which, if properly handled, will help to increase the value of the county live-stock exhibit.

COOPERATION WITH LIVE-STOCK ORGANIZATIONS.

The county fair officials should enlist every aid possible to make the live-stock show a success. To be successful it must by all means have the backing of the breeders of the county, and of other counties

if possible. Cooperation with the county live-stock association, if such an organization exists, and with the county agricultural agent is essential. If the live-stock association advocates a certain kind of breed of live stock, then the officials should provide liberal prizes for such classes. In a great many cases it will be advisable for the county fair officials to meet with the county live-stock association before the premium list and classification are announced. In most instances it would be well to allow the association the privilege of offering suggestions in making up the premium list and classification. In this way their interests will be represented and their support consequently will be stronger.

UNIFORMITY OF CLASSIFICATION.

The county fair classification should be uniform from year to year and, as far as possible, the classifications of different county fairs in the same State or section should be uniform. County fair secretaries should be careful that their show dates do not conflict with those of neighboring counties. To provide for uniformity in classifications, to arrange fair dates, and for other purposes an association composed of the county fair officials in the State is very helpful. Such organizations generally meet once a year for discussion. A good place and time for this meeting is at the State agricultural college during some farmers' meeting.

SPECIAL FEATURES.

The county fair secretary can introduce many features which will tend to make the live-stock exhibit better each year. He should by all means endeavor to have some special feature with a good-sized purse so as to stimulate discussion and create enthusiasm. The following brief mention of two such features may be useful.

FUTURITY CONTESTS.

One very effective feature which may be adopted is the futurity contest. In this the breeder names the animal which he will exhibit soon after or even before it is born; in case it is not yet born, the dam of the animal is named. In this contest, each breeder entering should be required to put up a sum of money which is to go into the general purse. He may be required to put up another sum just before the date of the fair, and at some shows the exhibitor is required to pay still another fee at the time of the actual contest. The amount required from each exhibitor should not be too great; but the nomination fee, even though it be small, is essential for the success of the futurity contest. All the money received through the nomination of animals is put into the general purse, which may be divided into three or more prizes. Generally the fair association adds additional

money to the purse. The more money in the purse the keener the competition. The animals nominated are judged during the fair week just as are the other classes.

Full information concerning futurity contest rules may be obtained from the secretaries of different State fairs and from the secretaries of live-stock breeders' associations.

JUDGING CONTESTS.

The live-stock judging contest for boys and girls is a feature which always draws interest and helps to enlarge the attendance at the county fair. In such a contest teams from different districts or from different schools may compete against one another or the contest may be for individuals. The former is the better method, since the outside interest will be greater. School teachers should be encouraged to enter teams, and with the assistance of the county agricultural agent may train the teams or individuals for the contest. The teams generally are composed of five contestants. Both team and individual prizes should be given. The county agent, agricultural college officials, or other competent persons may be called upon to help in drawing up the rules of such a contest and to help train the contestants and manage the contest.

SELECTION OF SUPERINTENDENTS, JUDGES, ETC.

The fair officials should select capable men to act as superintendents of the different kinds of live stock. It is better that these should be prominent local live-stock men, and, if possible, the same men should act each year.

In choosing the judges only men of known ability should be selected. These men should have had special training and experience along such lines. In most States the agricultural colleges will furnish competent judges. If the judges do their work well they should not only place the classes correctly, but should explain to the exhibitors and the audience after each class is placed why the animals were so placed. The advantage of having men with special training as live-stock judges is that such men can give in detail the reasons for the placing of each class, which is a feature that should not be overlooked.

ARRANGEMENT OF EXHIBITS.

Nothing so adds to the attractiveness of a live-stock exhibit as good arrangement supplemented with liberal placarding. The different kinds of live stock should be in separate divisions and the different breeds should also be kept separate. Each barn or section should be marked with a large sign, such as "Beef cattle," "Sheep," "Horses," "Swine," "Dairy cattle," "Poultry," etc., denoting the

kind of live stock in each. The location of each breed should be plainly marked also, and the exhibitors would be performing a great service if they would put up a placard before each animal indicating its sex, breed, name, sire, dam, age, weight, etc. Fair secretaries are overlooking a very important feature when they fail to see that this is done. In some instances it would be well to offer prizes to the exhibitor with the best kept and best placarded exhibit.

After the animals have been judged they should be kept unblanketed for a specified time each day, weather permitting.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JUDGES, PRIZE WINNERS, ETC.

A suitable board should be erected in the judging arena and on this board should be posted the name of the officiating judge, the breed being judged, the catalogue number, etc., of the class which is being judged, and also the winners in the previous class. The interest in the judging will be much greater if this information is given. If a program is printed, there should be placed in a conspicuous position on each animal or on the attendant a number which corresponds with the program or catalogue number. In announcing the prize winners on the bulletin boards, if programs are printed and distributed, the numbers may be announced instead of the names.

EXHIBITION OF PRIZE WINNERS.

A live-stock parade always attracts much attention and interest and in all cases should constitute a portion of the regular program. When possible a short talk by the live-stock judge or judges concerning each of the prize-winning animals and a few of those that did not win would be highly appreciated by the audience. Such features have great educational value, but few fairs take advantage of such opportunities.

RULES.

The rules governing a live-stock exhibition should be as few and as explicit as possible. Too many rules and rules which can not be enforced are worse than none at all. There are some, however, governing certain points which should be made. A few such rules are as follows:

1. The final date for entering should be announced, and no entries should be received after this date.
2. The time at which each class is to be shown should be announced and the program should be followed explicitly. Nothing so disgusts an audience as to sit and wait for a feature which does not appear according to the announced schedule.

3. After arrival at the show grounds all entries are under the supervision of the fair officials, live-stock superintendent, etc., and no animals should be allowed to leave the grounds without special permission. The live-stock superintendent has the right to call out any or all animals for parades or other special purposes. Other officials may exercise this privilege only through the superintendent of live stock.

4. The live-stock superintendent and the fair officials (the latter acting through the former) have the right to determine whether or not an animal may compete in any class, and the superintendent should verify the ages of all entries, their registration papers, health, etc.

5. The placings made by the judges are final unless protested in writing, and all protests should be made within a limited time and should be accompanied by a stipulated sum of money which is forfeited in case the protest is not sustained.

6. No barren animals should be permitted to compete in breeding classes, and the following rules may be used in governing this point:

(a) All cattle 3 years old or over entered in the breeding classes must have produced living progeny within 18 months of the first day of the exhibition.

(b) All swine 2 years old or over entered in the breeding classes must have produced living offspring within 12 months prior to the date of exhibition.

(c) All horses 5 years old or over entered in the breeding classes must have produced offspring within 18 months previous to the date of the show. This also applies to jacks and jennets.

7. All males 1 year old or over entered in the breeding classes should be registered. Females 1 year old or over should be registered, except in cases where grades are permitted to compete in the breeding classes. This rule should be followed in all cases. Breeders should be required to show their registration papers on demand of the fair officials.

8. Animals shown in breeding classes should not be permitted to show in fat classes.

PREMIUMS.

The division of the money offered as prizes depends upon the amount of money available for all prizes and upon other conditions. Ordinarily the prize money at county fairs on each class is divided into three premiums. In cases where three prizes are offered, the money is often divided in the proportion of 3-2-1. If only two prizes are given the proportion of 3 to 2 is suitable.

Nicely lettered ribbons should also be given. The colors generally used are blue for first prize, red for second, white for third, and

royal purple for champions. In nearly all cases the ribbon is sufficient for champion animals. This enables the county-fair officials to give more money on the remainder of the classifications.

Some of the classifications suggested later do not contain classes for certain groups of animals commonly shown at large fairs. While prizes for such classes have a value where competition is strong among professional breeders, it is believed that smaller fairs can give more encouragement to beginners and small breeders by using most of the money offered on a breed for increasing the number and value of prizes in the single classes.

At some fairs sweepstakes prizes are given. This involves the showing of animals of different types or breeds, as beef and dairy animals, in the same class. The placing of such classes very seldom gives satisfaction, and under no conditions is such a classification advisable.

CLASSIFICATIONS.

The following classifications are general and can be varied to suit local conditions. It must be kept in mind, however, that animals which are of different types—that is, used for different purposes—should not be classified or shown together. The light breeds of horses should not be shown with the draft breeds, the lard type of swine with the bacon type, etc. These are common errors of county fair classifications. If the number of animals exhibited is small, the different breeds of the same type of animals may be shown together, such as the breeds of mutton sheep, the breeds of beef cattle, etc., and, if necessary, the classification by ages may be reduced.

BEEF CATTLE.

The ages of cattle should be dated from September 1. Thus, all cattle born after September 1 in any year may be shown in the under-one-year classes for the remainder of that year and during all the next year. Such cattle would then be shown in the under-two-year classes during the year following, and so on. If more prizes are to be given than is indicated in the classifications which follow, two classes may be made for the calves and for yearlings. These are known as the juniors and seniors. The juniors consist of all animals born between January 1 and August 31, and the seniors consist of all animals born between September 1 and December 31, inclusive. For instance, a calf born on September 1 of the present year and shown in the fall of next year would be a senior calf, while one born January 1 of next year and shown at the same time would be classed as a junior calf. The same dates hold for the junior and senior yearlings. There may be junior and senior classes for both bulls and heifers.

The classes for beef cattle which are given below are intended for pure-bred animals, with the exception of the classification indicated for fat animals. Only pure-bred bulls should be allowed to compete. If there are few pure-bred beef cows in the county and a larger number of good grade cows, it may then be advisable to offer prizes for grade beef cows, in which case the classification given for pure-breds may be used. This classification may be used for each breed:

Bull 3 years or over.

Bull 2 years and under 3.

Bull 1 year and under 2.

Bull under 1 year.

Cow 3 years and over.

Cow 2 years and under 3.

Heifer 1 year and under 2.

Heifer under 1 year.

Champion bull, any age (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Champion cow, any age (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Get of sire—4 animals got by same sire (sire need not be shown).

Herd—1 bull and 4 females; bull, 1 year or over; females any age.

FAT CLASSES.

At most county fairs all steers, pure-breds, grades, and cross-breds should be shown together. Spayed or free-martin heifers, and in some cases open heifers, should be allowed to compete with the steers.

Steer 2 years and under 3.

Steer 1 year and under 2.

Steer under 1 year.

Champion fat steer, any age (limited to first-prize winners in previous classes).

DAIRY CATTLE.

The ages of dairy cattle should be reckoned the same as those of the beef breeds. The same classification as indicated for breeding beef animals may be used for dairy cattle. In these classes only pure-bred bulls should be allowed to compete, but if there are not large numbers of pure-bred cows in the county all breeds may be shown together and grade cows may be admitted. If grades are shown, only those which are sired by pure-bred bulls should be admitted.

DUAL-PURPOSE CATTLE.

At some county fairs the dual-purpose breeds, such as the Red Poll and the milking Shorthorn, may be shown together. However, if sufficient numbers are available for separate classes, these breeds should be judged separately. The same classifications as indicated for beef and dairy cattle may be used for dual-purpose cattle unless conditions warrant changes.

SWINE, LARD TYPE.

The dates for computing the ages of breeding classes of swine are fixed as September 1 for senior classes and March 1 for junior classes. Generally it is advisable for the county fair to have both junior and senior classes for swine. The following classification may be used for each breed for which prizes are offered:

Aged boar 2 years and over.

Senior yearling boar over 18 months and under 2 years.

Junior yearling boar over 12 months and under 18 months.

Senior boar pig over 6 months and under 12 months.

Junior boar pig under 6 months.

Champion boar any age (limited to first prize winners in previous classes).

The same classification is used for sows, but in addition a prize may be offered for best sow and suckling pigs. Group prizes may be offered as follows:

Best herd—1 boar and 3 sows, any age.

Get of sire—4 pigs, any age, the get of 1 boar.

FAT CLASSES.

Pen of 3 fat barrows over 12 months.

Pen of 3 fat barrows under 12 months.

Champion pen barrows, any age.

Barrow over 12 months.

Champion barrow, any age.

SWINE, BACON TYPE.

The same classification as indicated for the lard type of swine may be used for the bacon type, but the two types should never be shown together.

SHEEP.

The ages of sheep date from January 1 except in the case of Dorset Horns, the age of which may be dated from September 1. All sheep showing should have been shorn after March 1 of the year in which they are shown. The following classification is suggested for each breed for which prizes are offered. If grade ewe classes are shown, they should be the same as for pure-bred ewes.

Ram 2 years or over.

Ram 1 year and under 2.

Ram under 1 year.

Ewe 1 year and under 2.

Ewe under 1 year.

Champion ram (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Champion ewe (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Pen of 3 ram lambs.

Pen of 3 ewe lambs.

FAT SHEEP.

Pen of 3 wether lambs.

GOATS.

Only a few county fairs in sections where goats are raised will have need for a classification of Angora or other goats. The one given here may be reduced or enlarged as conditions necessitate.

Buck 2 years or over.

Buck 1 year and under 2.

Buck kid (under 1 year).

Doe 2 years or over.

Doe 1 year and under 2.

Doe kid (under 1 year).

Champion buck (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Champion doe (only first-prize winners to be shown).

Pen of 4 kids under 1 year, either or both sexes.

HORSES.

The ages of horses should be dated from January 1. All horses should be shown at the halter unless otherwise specified. Prizes offered for stallions should be for registered pure-breds only. In case grade mares are to be shown, the classification suggested for pure-bred mares may be used. Where there are but a few pure-bred mares in a community, pure-breds and grades may be shown together, in which case only those sired by pure-bred stallions should be allowed to enter. The following set of classes will serve for each breed shown:

ANY BREED OF HORSES SHOWN AT THE HALTER.

Stallion 4 years and over.

Stallion 3 years and under 4.

Stallion 2 years and under 3.

Stallion 1 year and under 2.

Mare 4 years and over.

Mare 3 years and under 4.

Mare 2 years and under 3.

Mare 1 year and under 2.

Foal under 1 year, either sex.

Mare and foal.

Champion stallion, any age (limited to first-prize winners).

Champion mare, any age (limited to first-prize winners).

Get of sire—4 animals by same sire—any age (sire need not be shown).

SPECIAL CLASSES (NO REQUIREMENTS AS TO BREEDING).

Light harness stallion, mare, or gelding, any age, shown to proper vehicle.

Heavy harness stallion, mare, or gelding, any age, shown to proper vehicle.

Pair light harness horses, any age, shown to proper vehicle.

Pair heavy harness horses, any age, shown to proper vehicle.

Combination stallion, mare, or gelding, to be shown in harness, unharnessed, and saddled in the ring, and to show 5 distinct saddle gaits.

Three-gaited saddle stallion, mare, or gelding.

JACKS.

All jacks entered in these classes should be registered.

Jack 4 years and over.

Jack 3 years and under 4.

Jack 2 years and under 3.

Jack 1 year and under 2.

Jack under 1 year.

Champion jack.

Get of sire—4 mules by same jack, any age (sire need not be shown).

The same classification may be used for jennets.

MULES.

Mule 4 years or over, either sex.

Mule 3 years and under 4, either sex.

Mule 2 years and under 3, either sex.

Mule 1 year and under 2, either sex.

Mule under 1 year, either sex.

Champion mule.

Span mules hitched to wagon.

PONIES.

Pony stallion, any age.

Pony mare, any age.

Pony foal, either sex.

Pony in harness.

Pair ponies in harness.

Pony under saddle, any age.

POULTRY.

Secretaries of fair associations, in preparing the poultry classifications for their premium lists, are requested to use the classification as shown in the American Standard of Perfection, which is published by the American Poultry Association. This also should be the guide used by all judges when placing awards on poultry.

For single entries the classification should be cock, hen, cockerel, and pullet, and the different ages should be judged separately. The classification also can be made to include pairs, trios, and pens of old and young birds, the old and the young birds competing separately.